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RHHMHAA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N35//
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SIPDIS, PLEASE PASS TO DHS OR COAST GUARD LIASON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EWWT](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [ELTN](#) [ATRN](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: 2008 AUTOMATED MUTUAL-ASSISTANCE VESSEL RESCUE (AMVER) AWARDS

REF: STATE 50488

¶1. This is an action request. Please see paragraphs 2 and 10.

¶2. Posts in or responsible for the following countries/entities are requested to assist in the annual presentation of awards to owners of vessels participating in the U.S. Coast Guard's Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue (AMVER) ship safety and rescue program:

Australia; Austria; Bahamas; Belgium; Brazil; Canada; Chile; China, People's Republic of; Croatia; Cyprus; Denmark; Ecuador; Egypt; France; Germany; Great Britain (United Kingdom); Greece; Hong Kong; Iceland; India; Isle of Man; Israel; Italy; Japan; Korea, Republic of; Kuwait; Malaysia; Monaco; Malta; Myanmar; Norway; Netherlands; New Zealand; Panama; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Russia; Saudi Arabia; Slovenia; Singapore; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Taiwan; Thailand; Turkey; United Arab Emirates.

NB: For all other posts, this is an information only cable.

¶3. The AMVER Awards Program recognizes those vessels which regularly participate in the AMVER system. Information on the AMVER program, including country award statistics, is available on the internet at <http://www.amver.com/>.

¶4. In connection with the Coast Guard's promotion of the AMVER system, the Department requests that addressee posts fully exploit the diplomatic potential of presentation of AMVER awards for 2007 participation. AMVER is an international program, operated by the U.S. Coast Guard, to assist the safety of vessels on the high seas. Merchant vessels of all nations are encouraged to send their sail plans, including departure message, periodic position reports, and arrival message, to the Coast Guard's AMVER Center. The information is processed in a computer database that maintains a plot of the positions of these ships throughout their voyages. Rescue authorities around the world can then obtain, through U.S. Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Centers, a list of participating ships in the vicinity of an emergency so that assistance can be sought from vessels nearby. For 50 years, AMVER has been effective in arranging emergency assistance to those who need it on the high seas. Vessel positions are disclosed only for reasons related to search and rescue. The AMVER communications network takes full advantage of user friendly, low cost email and internet technology with compressed

message, AMVER/Weather reports, sent from ships via satellite at little or no cost.

15. In 2007, AMVER merchant ship responses resulted in 450 lives saved and 65 lives assisted (for medical attention, evacuation, communications, food/fuel/supplies, etc). AMVER ships conducted 154 searches at sea to verify electronic distress alerts, thus preserving limited rescue assets for genuine emergencies.

16. The Coast Guard would appreciate your assistance presenting or distributing the AMVER awards. The awards are integral to AMVER ship recruitment and retention efforts. AMVER award ceremonies can provide a platform to promote American trade interests and good will abroad. Safer oceans contribute to more efficient commerce.

17. In past years, many posts have arranged a small ceremony or reception for award winners, company representatives and public or private individuals who may be in a position to assist the AMVER program. Inclusion of ranking host government officials or local celebrities in award ceremonies ensures maximum positive publicity for U.S. sponsorship of this humanitarian program. Major ceremonies have been held in conjunction with Propeller Club dinners, shipping conferences and exhibitions and other maritime venues. Local SDOs and Combatant Commands should take advantage of opportune U.S. Coast Guard Flag/SES visits, Coast Guard cutter deployments, search and rescue exercises and AMVER awards to highlight U.S. humanitarian and maritime safety assistance.

18. It is usually advantageous to present the awards at a location closest to the headquarters of the ship owners. Thus a consulate in

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a port city might be a better location than an inland embassy. We recognize that posts in countries with only one or two award winners may not wish to hold a presentation ceremony. In such cases, it might be appropriate to invite winners to call on a ranking Embassy/Consulate official to receive the award, perhaps with a photographer present.

19. The Department understands budget restrictions and AMVER award ceremonies need not be elaborate affairs. Regrettably, the U. S. Coast Guard lacks the fiscal authority to spend funding in support of these ceremonies. Local ship owner associations, Propeller Clubs, or maritime organizations might offer to sponsor such ceremonies. The Coast Guard will make every effort to provide a representative at opportune major award events. U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, U.S. Coast Guard Activities Europe, and Far East Section are not funded for travel to AMVER award ceremonies but may be able to attend some local events. Regional U.S. Coast Guard International Ship and Port Facility Security Liaison Officers (ISPSLOs) may be invited to attend.

110. To determine which awards should be mailed to posts for distribution, as well as those to be mailed directly to recipients by the Coast Guard, the Department requests that posts advise Coast Guard by June 30, 2008, whether or not they are willing to assist. Please ensure reply either by cable to COGARD AMR NEW YORK NY, INFO COMDT COGARD WASH DC//CG-534// or email to beverly.a.howard@uscg.mil.

Email is the preferred method. Detailed lists of award winning companies and ships can be provided by email attachment for review to determine presentation potential. In prior years there were occasions when awards were distributed to companies prior to responses from posts. Cables/emails from posts wishing to assist should include the name and position of the person at the post to whom award materials should be addressed (Point of Contact), specific mailing (APO/FPO or street) address details, and a proposed presentation date. The AMVER packages containing awards, information for post personnel, suggested presentation remarks, press release and other related materials will be forwarded by mail or courier to the POC. Please advise by cable or email if you prefer that awards be mailed directly to recipient companies. The awards given to these vessels are in recognition of their dedicated commitment to maritime safety.

111. AMVER acknowledges some discrepancies between award data provided early in the year and revised data with the award package. This is

due to ships identified in the processing as having changed name, flag, company or verified shipyard periods to maintain award eligibility. Address data is based on the latest available Lloyd's Register of Shipping Information.

¶12. As a result of ongoing international discussions and proposals concerning maritime domain awareness, port security and tracking of merchant ships at sea, AMVER's visibility as a successful safety model has risen significantly. AMVER continues to research technological advances to make the program even more cost efficient and effective. AMVER officials are working with industry, governments, other ship reporting operators, and the International Maritime Organization to maintain the integrity of ship reporting for search and rescue purposes and to ensure ship position information retains its priority availability for purposes of safety of life at sea. The Coast Guard sincerely appreciates worldwide diplomatic support to highlight the role played by AMVER ships in preventing loss of life and property.

¶13. The Department is supporting the international roll-out of the Global Maritime Partnership (GMP) initiative (reftel). GMP is a new approach to building cooperative relationships among maritime nations, all of which benefit from and share a stake in international commerce, safety, security, and freedom of the seas. GMP unites mariners, port operators, commercial shippers, multilateral and non-governmental organizations, interagency, and international entities in a quest to build a network of partners with a global consensus on policy principles. AMVER captures the exact qualities that GMP hopes to achieve.

¶14. POC for information on AMVER awards is Ms. Beverly Howard, AMVER Maritime Relations, 1 South Street New York, NY 10004 USA, phone (212) 668-7764, fax (212) 668-7684 or email: beverly.a.howard@uscg.mil.
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